



How to Benefit From the Outdoors

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In the name of Allah, The Most Gracious, The Most Merciful





Assalamu'alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuhu,

We pray that this message reaches you
in good health and imaan.

On behalf of our AMAU Academy team, we would like
to present to you these compiled notes that we have
prepared to make your journey with us a lot easier.

Our notes are compiled by the AMAU Admin team
and have not been comprehensively checked
by a teacher.

If you find any errors or corrections that need
to be made, kindly inform us via our email
helpdesk@amauacademy.com

May Allah make our paths toward seeking
beneficial knowledge easy and kindle our hearts
with sincerity and gratefulness
towards Him.

Jazakumullahu Khayran



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Glossary



جل جلاله | Jalla Jalāluhu
Allah the Most Exalted



صلى الله عليه وسلم | Sallāllāhu Alayhi Wa Sallam
Peace and blessings of Allah be upon him

Outdoor Adventures for Everyone

Chapter One

In this segment, let's explore a variety of outdoor activities tailored for individuals who may not be inclined to encounter wildlife up close. We'll delve into pursuits like hiking and scrambling, inviting you to embrace the richness of the outdoors.

1 Mindset Shift for Future Generations

Begin with the perspective of raising Muslim children for a world where they will have to live like strangers, emphasising a balance between hard skills, religious knowledge, and often-overlooked soft skills.

2 Simple Joys of Nature

Transition to practical activities, starting with a family walk outdoors. Step away from technology and appreciate the environment, Allah's ﷻ creation, and the subtle joys of nature. This lays the foundation for further exploration and the acquisition of life-enhancing skills.

3 Foundational Step – Hiking

Explore hiking as a foundational step into the world of outdoor activities. Overcome trepidations and fears by trusting in Allah ﷻ and challenging parental-instilled fears.

When you decide where to go within the national park, choose a specific section for your walk. Begin with an easy route, perhaps a mock trail indicated on a simple map. Before setting out, prepare by grabbing a small backpack. Ensure it contains essentials like water, a rain jacket, and sturdy shoes or boots. Opting for boots or hiking trails is preferable for a more comfortable and secure outdoor experience.

4 Next Level Challenge – Scrambling

As you become more comfortable with hiking and seek greater challenges, consider transitioning to "scrambling," a form of hiking that involves sections of rock climbing without ropes. Unlike traditional roped climbing, scrambling lacks the safety net of ropes, introducing a higher level of risk.

Decision-making skills and trust in hiking companions become crucial. While scrambling poses challenges, it also enhances confidence in outdoor pursuits.



5

Thrills of Canyoning

Unveil the concept of "canyoning," describing an adventurous journey along mountain cliffs involving hiking, jumping, and swimming. Experience varying elevations and swimming requirements, adding an extra layer of thrill to this outdoor pursuit.

6

Broadening Horizons - Mountaineering

Broaden your horizons to encompass mountaineering, including rock climbing and abseiling. Enrich your outdoor tapestry with practical insights, highlighting the simplicity of acquiring life skills through dedication and effort.

7

Encouragement for Future Generations

Beyond physical engagement, these pursuits foster self-reliance, confidence, and the ability to make informed decisions—a treasure trove of life skills for every Muslim. This concludes our exploration, setting the stage for a deeper engagement with the world of outdoor adventures.

Signs of Allah ﷻ in the Natural World

Chapter Two



In our journey through the outdoors, we encounter countless signs of Allah's ﷻ creation, marvelling at the wonders of wildlife and the beauty of the wilderness. Each encounter with vast mountains, flowing rivers, deep canyons, and diverse wildlife reinforces the belief in the greatness of their Creator.

Allah ﷻ says in the Qur'an:

1

وَمَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا طَائِرٍ يَطِيرُ بِجَنَاحَيْهِ إِلَّا أُمَمٌ أَمْثَالُكُمْ ۚ مَا فَرَّطْنَا فِي الْكِتَابِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ ۚ

There is not a moving (living) creature on earth, nor a bird that flies with its two wings, but are communities like you.

Surah al-An'am 38

Reflecting on the intricate structures and systems within the animal kingdom, we recognize that every creature, from the smallest ant to the mightiest lion, is part of a community with families, responsibilities, and sustenance provided by Allah. In their unique ways, they engage in acts of worship, acknowledging their Creator.

A

● Religious and Physical Benefits

The real religious benefit of engaging in outdoor activities extends beyond the physical realm—it contributes significantly to one's overall health and well-being.

The Prophet ﷺ said in a hadith:

2

نِعْمَتَانِ مَغْبُوءٌ فِيهِمَا كَثِيرٌ مِنَ النَّاسِ، الصَّحَّةُ وَالْفَرَاغُ

There are two blessings that many people are deceived into losing: health and free time.

Sahih al-Bukhari 6412

While acknowledging permissible entertainment, it's crucial to be mindful of wasting time on activities considered haraam. Instead, explore the outdoors as a wholesome and permissible source of joy, aligning with Islamic values.

B • Practical Islamic Teachings in the Wilderness

Practical Islamic teachings find relevance in the wilderness. For instance, the Fiqh issues pertaining to being outside, wherein simple acts such as making wudu with limited water, and learning to determine prayer times by the sun's position become valuable skills. These experiences offer a glimpse into the versatility of Islam as a way of life adaptable to any environment.

Cooperation and brotherhood take centre stage, emphasising the importance of helping one another in challenging situations.

The Prophet ﷺ told us:

3

اللَّهُ فِي عَوْنِ الْعَبْدِ مَا كَانَ الْعَبْدُ فِي عَوْنِ أَخِيهِ

Allah helps His slave as long as he helps his brother.

Sahih Muslim 2699

Trust, reliance, and reminding one another of Allah ﷻ help build bonds of brotherhood, reinforcing the idea that believers are like one body.

C • Lessons in Tawakkal and Life Skills

The journey also instils a sense of reliance on Allah ﷻ (Tawakkal), especially in moments of vulnerability, where the realisation dawns that there is nothing to protect oneself except through His mercy. Thus, in situations like these, one turns to Adhkaar as a means of protection and Ruqyah for cure, and so on. The lessons of patience, perseverance, and gratitude acquired in the wilderness become valuable assets applicable to various facets of life.

In conclusion, these outdoor experiences extend beyond mere adventure; they encompass a holistic approach to life. The outdoors serve as a classroom, offering lessons in faith, cooperation, patience, and self-reliance. As we continue this exploration, we delve into the worldly benefits and soft skills cultivated through this unique lifestyle.

May Allah ﷻ grant us the wisdom to extract valuable lessons from His creation and apply them to lead fulfilling lives.

Developing Life Skills Through Outdoor Activities

Chapter Three

In the quest for both physical well-being and spiritual elevation, venturing outdoors and engaging in activities amidst nature brings profound benefits. These advantages extend beyond the immediate physical realm, intertwining with the spiritual aspects of life, seeking reward from Allah ﷻ through intention and mindfulness.

1 Physical Well-being

Embarking on outdoor activities, particularly those that require physical exertion, serves as a gateway to improved health. Even a modest beginning, such as a brisk ten-minute walk, lays the foundation for enhanced fitness. Consider the wisdom behind walking with added weight – a practice observed in elite forces worldwide. This simple yet impactful exercise builds endurance, and when undertaken with the intention of gaining Allah's ﷻ reward, every step becomes an act of worship.

2 Planning and Organisation

Preparing for outdoor endeavours involves meticulous planning – selecting routes, packing essentials, and organising belongings. This meticulous planning not only ensures a smoother journey but also cultivates skills that extend to everyday life. The ability to strategize, organise, and prioritise fosters efficiency and effectiveness, invaluable traits in both personal and professional spheres.

3 Coping with Difficulties

The wilderness and natural environments, with their unpredictable elements, introduce challenges. Learning to navigate difficulties outdoors translates into resilience and problem-solving skills applicable in all facets of life. This hands-on experience instils confidence, teaching us to rely on Allah ﷻ and emerge victorious, even in challenging circumstances.

4 Living with the Basics

Experiencing a minimalist lifestyle outdoors, with only essentials at hand, offers a stark contrast to the materialistic norms of modern society. This return to basics prompts introspection, reinforcing the realisation that true contentment lies beyond the pursuit of worldly luxuries.

5 Resource Conservation and Sustainability

In the wilderness, resources such as water, food, and space are limited. The practice of conserving resources becomes second nature, imparting valuable lessons in responsible consumption that can be applied to our daily lives.

6

Teamwork and Leadership

Outdoor activities demand collaboration and leadership. The experience of leading or being part of a team enhances interpersonal skills, fosters cooperation, and develops the ability to make sound decisions for the collective good.

7

Gently Pushing Boundaries

Engaging in activities that gently push one's comfort zone, while ensuring safety, cultivates bravery and resilience. This sense of accomplishment contributes to the development of a robust character, capable of facing life's challenges with confidence.

8

Cooking and Self-sufficiency

Outdoor expeditions often require cooking skills and self-sufficiency. The ability to prepare a simple meal and attend to personal needs contributes to independence, valuable for those moments when one finds themselves alone or away from familiar surroundings.

9

Cost-effectiveness

One of the remarkable aspects of outdoor activities is their accessibility. Unlike many hobbies or sports that require substantial financial investment, hiking, and related pursuits are relatively affordable. With proper care, equipment lasts for years, making it an inclusive and sustainable choice.

To sum up, embracing the outdoors transcends the boundaries of a recreational activity; it becomes a holistic approach to life. The skills acquired and lessons learned in nature seamlessly integrate into our daily existence, fostering physical vitality, mental resilience, and spiritual elevation. As we embark on this journey, let our every step be a means of drawing closer to Allah ﷻ, seeking His reward in both the physical and spiritual realms.

Tips for Getting Started

Chapter Four

For those who have yet to tread the path of hiking and mountaineering, the prospect may seem daunting. One simple but effective way to initiate this journey is by embracing a gradual approach. In this chapter, we'll delve into practical steps for beginners, drawing upon personal experiences and valuable insights.

1

The First Step: Counting Your Steps

Embarking on a hiking journey need not be an overwhelming endeavour. Start by incorporating a step counter into your routine. A modest investment of ten to twenty US dollars can get you a reliable wrist-worn step counter. Set achievable goals, such as walking ten thousand steps a day. This simple practice lays the foundation for increased physical activity.

2

Exploring the Local Surroundings

Begin your hiking journey by exploring your local area. Regardless of your climate or location, there are always outdoor spaces to discover. Whether strolling along the beach, walking down a canal, or venturing into a nearby park, take the time to familiarise yourself with your surroundings. This approach provides a gentle introduction to the world of hiking without the need for elaborate mountain trails.

3

Essential Gear: Proper Shoes and Clothing

Invest in proper footwear for your hiking excursions. Ensure your shoes fit well, allowing for a finger's width behind the heel, especially with hiking socks. These socks provide moisture control and prevent abrasion. As you progress, consider upgrading to trail running shoes or hiking boots. Additionally, dress in layers suitable for the weather, emphasising the importance of a waterproof rain jacket.

4

Basic Skills for Beginners

As a novice hiker, focus on fundamental skills before delving into advanced techniques. Master the art of walking efficiently and confidently. Acquire the ability to read basic trail maps, understand route markers, and identify natural and man-made landmarks. Develop a keen sense of direction and spatial awareness.

5

Planning Your First Hike

When planning your inaugural hike, book the trail with local nature reserves or conservation authorities. Choose a well-marked trail, either circular or linear, based on your preference. Pay attention to the terrain, potential obstacles, and weather conditions. Always have a backup plan and inform someone reliable about your hiking itinerary.

6

Gathering Local Knowledge

Tap into local expertise by consulting park rangers or knowledgeable individuals. Ask for insights about the trail, potential highlights, and any safety considerations. Local knowledge enhances your understanding of the environment and enriches your hiking experience.

7

Reading Reviews and Learning from Others

Prior to your hike, read reviews from fellow hikers who have explored the same trail. Learn from their experiences, gather tips, and be aware of potential challenges. Understand the terrain, weather conditions, and noteworthy features to enhance your preparedness.

8

Emphasising Safety

Safety is paramount, especially when hiking with family. Adhere to the rule of a minimum of three people in a group, ensuring a supportive ratio of one adult to four individuals. Prioritise personal safety, be vigilant of surroundings and avoid risky behaviours. Always carry emergency contact information and be prepared for unexpected situations.

In the next chapter, we will delve into more advanced aspects of hiking, providing valuable insights for those looking to elevate their outdoor pursuits.

Expert Advice and Essential Gear

Chapter Five

Embarking on a hiking journey involves careful preparation to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience. In this chapter, we will explore valuable insights shared during a lecture on hiking essentials.

1 Footwear Matters



When it comes to shoes, prioritise sturdy ones with ankle support, waterproofing, and non-slip soles. Ensure a comfortable fit, perhaps a half-size larger than your usual, allowing room for movement. This prevents discomfort and potential injuries, especially during descents.

2 Dress Smart



Choose clothing made of wicking or quick-dry material. These fabrics pull moisture away from your body, preventing discomfort and health issues. Opt for hard-wearing materials, like ripstop, to withstand rough conditions. Layering is key for adapting to various temperatures during your hike.

3 Protect Your Head



In sunny conditions, a cap or hat is a must. A beanie can provide warmth in colder weather. Remember, keeping your head warm is vital for overall comfort.

4 Be Weather-Ready



Always be prepared for unpredictable weather changes. Layer your clothing and carry a lightweight, emergency survival bag to shield yourself from extreme conditions.

5 Stay Hydrated



Carry at least two litres of water and use purification drops or a water filter for safe drinking. Consider a water bladder for convenient sipping on the go. Additionally, don't forget to replenish electrolytes with rehydration sachets.

6 First Aid Essentials



Pack basic first aid items like plasters, blister treatments, wound spray, pain relievers, and any necessary medications. Include a water-resistant bag liner for protection.

7 **Navigation Tools**



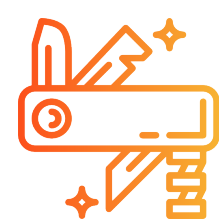
Bring a waterproof map and compass, and ensure you know how to use them. Having a backup map is advisable in case of emergencies.

8 **Light Your Way**



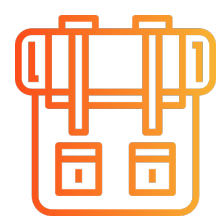
Carry a reliable torch with extra batteries, aiding visibility in the dark. A headlamp is practical for hands-free use.

9 **Knowledge of the Knife**



A versatile knife is essential for various tasks. Keep it sharp and rust-free by applying linseed oil or grease.

10 **Choose the Right Backpack**



Select a backpack with sturdy back support, padding, and adjustable straps. Distribute weight evenly, focusing on your hips rather than shoulders. Know where each item is stored for easy access.

11 **Food Considerations**



Pack lightweight, non-perishable food items. Consider pre-packaged meals, such as Russian packs, and avoid carrying items prone to spoilage. A small, refillable stove is handy for cooking.

12 **Fire Safety**



If permitted, learn to start a fire using traditional methods like flint or carry a compact stove for fuel efficiency.

By following these simple yet crucial guidelines, you'll enhance your hiking experience, making it both safe and enjoyable. Remember, preparation is the key to a successful journey into the great outdoors.

Finding Motivation for Outdoor Adventures

Chapter Six

In this segment, we delve into some exhilarating moments and stories that may inspire and captivate the adventurous spirit in us.



1 Confronting Crocodile-Infested Waters

During a daring five-day hike in Kruger National Park, Mr. Shaheed found himself standing at the edge of the Oliphant's River.

Despite spotting three to five crocodiles sunning themselves on the bank, the adventurer made a bold decision. Strapping off his backpack, and drawing his knife, he waded through the river, successfully crossing to the other side. A testament to courage and resilience.



2 A Bold Encounter with Lions

Chasing lions in the wild might sound like a risky venture, but for this explorer, it was an unforgettable experience. The tale unfolds with the revelation that animals, even the mighty lions, often shy away from humans.

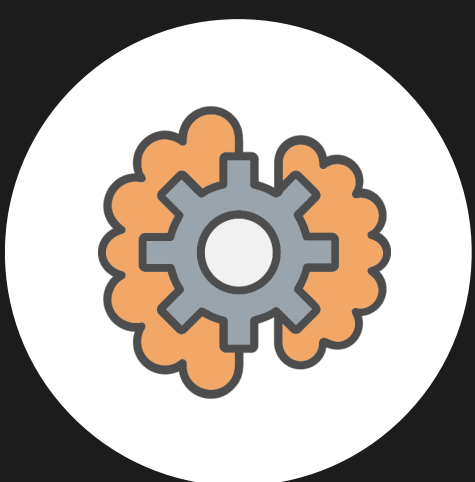
The rangers had shared that animals fear the two-legged creatures, having been hunted on foot for generations. A remarkable encounter showcasing the harmonious balance between humans and the wild.



3 Navigating a Tough Situation in the Mountains

In a gripping account of survival, the adventurer recounted a perilous climb up a treacherous peak, aiming to conquer 3,500 metres in just two days.

The team faced adversity when one member broke his leg, leaving them isolated in the mountains. Relying on experience and a calm approach, they persevered, eventually rescued by a helicopter. A lesson in resilience and the importance of following tried-and-true processes in times of crisis.



4 Scouting Skills for Life

Reflecting on the impact of scouting on his son, Mr. Shaheed emphasised the significance of acquiring life skills through outdoor activities.

Joining the scouting movement resulted in remarkable growth and confidence. The experience not only included outdoor adventures but also instilled a combination of life skills that set the young scouts apart, fostering qualities of resilience and adaptability that transcend academic and athletic achievements.

From these captivating narratives, we take invaluable lessons from being outdoors. Each story underscores the resilience, courage, and growth that come from embracing the unpredictable and relishing the beauty of Allah's ﷻ creation.



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